

44. (New) The tray system of claim 43, wherein the sub-tray load beam seat further comprises at least one restraining portion extending upwardly from the load beam rest surface.

45. (New) The tray system of claim 42, wherein the opening passing from the first side of the sub-tray to the second side of the sub-tray is a vacuum port for providing fluid communication between the sub-tray load beam seat and the second side of the sub-tray.

46. (New) The tray system of claim 41, wherein the sub-tray further comprises alignment pins for aligning the tray to the sub-tray.

47. (New) The tray system of claim 41 in combination with at least one component.

48. (New) The tray system of claim 47, wherein the at least one component is a suspension used in a hard disk drive.

REMARKS

The present application is a continuation of parent application 09/409,010, the continuation being filed on February 11, 2002. A Petition for Revival was also filed for the parent application on the same date. Prior to the revival petition, the parent application was considered abandoned for failure to respond to an Office Action issued October 30, 2000. The above claim amendments are submitted with the following remarks to be fully responsive to the October 30, 2000 Office Action and to place the application in condition for allowance.

In the October 30, 2000 Office Action, the Examiner rejected claims 1-26 under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention. In

addition, the Examiner rejected claims 2, 4-7, 9, 11, 12-15, and 19-26 under 35 U.S.C. §112, fourth paragraph, for an issue regarding the form of the claims. These rejections are moot in light of the cancellation of claims 1-26 and addition of new claims 27-48 by the present amendment. Thus, withdrawal of the §112 rejections is believed proper and is requested.

In addition, the Examiner rejected claims 1-7 and 9-15 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Royer et al. (US 5,547,082) and rejected claims 8 and 16-26 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Royer et al. (US 5,547,082) in view of Japan Patent No. 0183899 or Yamashita et al. (US 5,918,362). New independent claim 27 is directed to a tray system for holding and positioning components, which includes a first tray and a second tray engageable with the first tray. Both the first and second trays include a first side having at least one component receptacle and an opposite second side having at least one component receptacle. In addition, the second side of the first tray is adjacent to the second side of the first tray so that at least one of the component receptacles of the first side of the second tray is substantially aligned with at least one of the component receptacles of the second side of the first tray for cooperatively restraining the motion of a component positioned therein. While Royer et al. disclose a tray for holding components, there is no suggestion or teaching of a tray system having component receptacles on both the first and second side of adjacent trays. Since Royer et al. do not even recognize such a configuration, it follows that there is no recognition of substantially aligning component receptacles of adjacent trays, as in the present invention. Japan Patent No. 0183899 and Yamashita et al., which are both cited by the Examiner for their use of vacuum chambers with a tray, do nothing to cure the deficiencies of Royer et al. Thus, the present invention is believed allowable over the references cited by the Examiner.

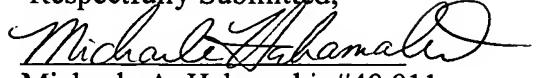
In light of at least the reasons set out above, the present invention is patentably distinct over the cited references and allowance of pending claims 27-48 is respectfully requested. If a telephonic conference would be helpful in resolving any outstanding issues in the present application, the Examiner is invited to contact Applicants' undersigned representative.

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No fee is deemed necessary in connection with the filing of this Preliminary Amendment. Should any other fees be required, the Commissioner is authorized to charge Kagan Binder Deposit Account No. 50-1775 and thereafter notify us of the same.

Respectfully Submitted,
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EXHIBIT A
(Marked-up copy of paragraphs from specification)

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Please amend the paragraph beginning on page 27, line 10 to read as follows:

Additional detail concerning the apparatus 10 and its methods of operation can be found in U.S. Patent Application Number [95]09/250,823 filed February 17, 1999, the specification of which is incorporated herein in its entirety.

Please amend the paragraph beginning on page 33, line 1 to read as follows:

Inwardly adjacent to the grooves 144-48 is a shoulder of shelf 154. Shelf 154 provides a sealing surface for the O-ring 114 when the tray 102 is inverted. Lying inwardly of the shelf 154 is the repository 156 wherein the suspensions or other appropriate component part resides. During shipping, adjacent stacked plates will cooperate to retain the suspensions in place in the repository 156 while in operation during assembly the tray [152]102 will cooperate with the vacuum chamber provided by the base 100 to retain the suspensions in place using the vacuum provided by the vacuum source.

Please amend the paragraph beginning on page 40, line 5 to read as follows:

The shipping advantages provided by the present invention can be seen by first examining Figure 9, 10, and 18A and then Figures 9, 11, and 18B which show stacked trays in "upright" and "inverted" orientations. Particularly referring to Figure 18A, three stacked trays 102A, 102B and 102C capture and restrain from motion suspensions A. Focusing on the lower two trays, labeled 102B and 102C, it will be observed that each supports a suspension A from the bottom while the tray immediately above restrains the suspensions from moving vertically. Thus, in this orientation, the suspension rests on the load beam seat 165, particularly the load beam engagement portion 208, and is engaged upon its upper surface by the load beam seat 204. Additionally, as best seen in Figure 9[. T], the stake 163 captures the suspension A by its reception by the hole J on the bottom and the relief or second portion 172 receives and restrains the collar K of the suspension A on the top side.

It will be understood therefore that the load beam seats on the "top" and "bottom" sides of the tray 102 cooperate to trap the load beam therebetween when multiple trays are [staked] stacked for shipment and the base plate seats on the "top" and "bottom" sides of the tray 102 trap the base plates therebetween.

Please amend the paragraph beginning on page 45, line 18 to read as follows:

The sub-tray 408 further includes a plurality of vacuum or load beam seats 442 arranged in rows. As seen in [the] Figure 22, the sub-tray 408 includes three such rows or vacuum bridges 444A-444C of vacuum or load beam seats 442 [(best seen in Figures 33-37B)], which will be described further below. As best seen in Figure 24 the sub-tray plate 441 includes a plurality of through holes 446 that extend from the bottom surface 448 of the plate 441 through the plate and through the load beam seats 442 and a plurality of bolt tap holes 449. The through holes 446 serve as vacuum ports for the transmission of the vacuum provided through the vacuum port 424 of vacuum chamber 404 through to the vacuum or load beam seats 442, which in turn are attached to or integral with the top surface 450 of the plate 441. The bolt tap holes 449, in turn, align with the counter-sunk bolt holes 434 in the vacuum chambers 404 and 406 to enable a bolt to be threaded into the holes 434 and into the sub-tray to rigidly attach the sub-tray to the base 400.